

## **R E M A R K S**

Claims 1 through 16 are in the application, with Claims 1, 9 and 14 being independent.

Claims 1 through 16 are subject to an election requirement. In particular, the Office Action groups the claims into Claims 1 through 13 (Specie I), and Claims 14 through 16 (Specie II). In response to the requirement, Applicant provisionally elects Specie I, Claims 1 through 13. Examination and allowance of the elected claims are respectfully requested. This election is made with traverse for the foregoing reasons.

M.P.E.P. § 806.04(f) indicates that Claims to be restricted to different species must be mutually exclusive. Applicant submits that Claims 14 through 16 are not mutually exclusive of Claims 1 through 13 and therefore do not represent a unique specie. For example, all limitations of Claim 1 are found in the alleged specie described by Claim 14. Accordingly, the alleged species are also not patentably distinct from one another as required by §806.04(h). In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the election requirement.

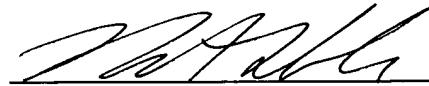
## CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant requests examination of Claims 1 through 16 on the merits. Claims 1 through 16 are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

If there remains any question regarding the present application, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is cordially requested to contact the undersigned via telephone at (203) 972-0049.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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